

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

PM-03 DODE-00 L-01 SP-02 EB-04 TRSE-00 OMB-01

ACDA-10 IGA-01 /051 W

-----073070 111835Z /50

P 101123Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5119

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KIGALI 980

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, RW

SUBJECT: RWANDAN REQUEST FOR NON-LETHAL MILITARY AID

REF (A) KIGALI 816, (B) STATE 186095

SUMMARY: DEPT'S RESPONSE TO RWANDAN REQUEST FALLS SHORT OF MEETING EITHER RWANDAN NEEDS OR USG POLICY GOALS. REQUEST RECONSIDERATION. END SUMMARY

1. AS DEPT CERTAINLY AWARE, CHANGES PROPOSED REF (B) TO WHAT HAD BEEN INTENDED AS INTERIM REPLY TO GOR REQUEST FOR NON-LETHAL MILITARY AID (REF. A) SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER OUR DRAFT NOTE'S CHARACTER. INSTEAD OF PROMISING TO EXAMINE THE REQUEST IN DETAIL, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT RWANDAN ARMY'S NATION-BUILDING ROLE AND SCARCITY OF GOR DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES, LATERED MSG WOULD CONSTITUTE FORMAL REJECTION OF RWANDAN REQUEST AND ADVISE INSTEAD THAT GOR PURSUE COMMERCIAL POSSIBILITIES, WHICH IN PRACTICAL TERMS ARE NIL.

2. INASMUCH AS REVISED MESSAGE WILL BE A BITTER PILL FOR PRES. HABYARIMANA TO SWALLOW, SUGGEST WE PAUSE BEFORE PUTTING IT INTO FINAL FORM TO REFLECT ON HOW WE GOT WHERE WE
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ARE AND WHAT EFFECT OF NEGATIVE MSG WILL BE.

(A) DEPT IS AWARE THAT I HAVE NEVER ADVOCATED MILITARY AID PER SE FOR RWANDA AND HAVE TAKEN GREAT PAINS TO DAMPEN GOR HOPES FOR SUCH AID. THIS DESPITE APPARENT REAL SECURITY WORRIES OF PRESIDENT AND TOP MILITARY OFFICERS OVER SOVIET-SUPPORTED ARMS BUILD-UPS IN UGANDA AND BURUNDI (WHOSE ARMIES

FAR OUTWEIGH RWANDA'S) AND SOVIET MISCHIEF ELSEWHERE IN REGION. THIS ALSO DESPITE SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS' REPORTED GRUMBLING AT PRESIDENT'S "OVER-EMPHASIS" ON DEVELOPMENT AND NEGLECT OF RWANDA'S SECURITY NEEDS.

(B) SENSITIVE TO POLICY LINE OF NEW ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON (AN ADMINISTRATION WHICH HAS OTHERWISE IMPRESSED RWANDANS WITH ITS UNDERSTANDING OF AFRICAN PROBLEMS), HABYARIMANA CRAFTED A SPECIAL PITCH FOR AID OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED TO PACIFY MILITARY OFFICERS AS WELL AS PLEASE OUR OWN EARS: HE REQUESTED "NON-LETHAL" MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHICH WOULD EASE SECURITY WORRIES WHILE ALSO SERVING CONSTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES. DESPITE MY INITIAL MISGIVINGS, IT WAS A PITCH WHICH FRANKLY CAUGHT MY FANCY WHEN ADVANCED BY GOR DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON, AND I BELIEVE IT MADE SENSE TO OTHERS JUST AS OPPOSED AS I TO INTRODUCING ARMS RACE INTO RWANDA. BY SUPPORTING MILITARY AS NATION-BUILDING INSTITUTION, WE COULD HELP HABYARIMANA CHANNEL RESOURCES AND ENERGIES INTO CONSTRUCTIVE DIRECTION WHILE ALSO HELPING DETER POTENTIAL MISCHIEF-MAKERS.

(C) TROUBLE WAS, PITCH DID NOT FIT EXISTING POLICY PIGEONHOLES IN WASHINGTON, DESIGNED MORE TO DISCOURAGE APPEALS FOR HIGH-COST, HIGH-TECHNOLOGY WEAPONRY AND TO SUIT CRITICAL STRATEGIC INTERESTS OF U.S. GOR ONLY WANTED TRUCKS, AMBULANCES, HELICOPTERS, A PAIR OF C-130'S PERHAPS, MEDICINES, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND TRAINING--AND IT COULDN'T PAY FOR THEM. NOR WAS IT OF ANY STRATEGIC INTEREST TO US.

(D) HOWEVER, DELEGATION WAS NOT RPT NOT TOLD NO IN WASHINGTON AND IN FACT LEFT BELIEVING THAT SOME USG OFFICIALS WERE SYMPATHETIC. AFTER RWANDAN'S DEPARTURE AND WITH ENCOURAGEMENT OF DOD AND T, EFFORTS WERE MADE TO FIND MEANS OF ACCOMMODATING SPECIAL CHARACTER OF RWANDAN PITCH AS "TEST CASE" FOR MORE FLEXIBLE POLICY BETTER SUITED TO POOREST AFRICAN COUNTRIES. EVIDENTLY THESE EFFORTS FAILED, AND NO ROOM COULD BE FOUND FOR RWANDA ON PD LIST.

(E) INTERVENING PERIOD SINCE DELEGATION VISITED WASHINGTON HAS SEEN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS IN RWANDA'S NEIGHBORHOOD, HOWEVER, NOTABLY THE DRAMATIC SHIFT IN ALIGNMENTS IN HORN AND GROWING U.S. EGYPTIAN-SUDANESE COOPERATION. THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE AT ONCE SHOWN RWANDANS (I) THAT WE TOO ARE CONCERNED OVER SOVIET MANEUVERS IN THE REGION AND (II) THAT "EXCEPTIONS" COULD BE MADE TO WASHINGTON ARMS LIMITATION POLICIES WHEN IT SUITED U.S. INTERESTS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KIGALI 980

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3. WITH THIS BACKGROUND IN MIND, WE SHOULD NOT BE
SURPRISED AT INEVITABLE GOR CONSTERNATION OVER NEGATIVE
RESPONSE WE ARE ABOUT TO GIVE THEM. I FORESEE PARTICULAR
PROBLEMS ON FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) RESOURCE PRIORITIES. RWANDANS HAVE STRESSED, AND
AT LEAST SOME WASHINGTON INTERLOCUTORS HAVE AGREED, THAT
EVERY SOVEREIGN NATION HAS ELEMENTAL DEFENSE OBLIGATIONS
WHICH IMPLY DRAIN ON NATIONAL RESOURCES NEEDED FOR DEVELOP-
MENT. SENSIBLY, GOR IS SEEKING MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHICH
WOULD SERVE DUAL ROLE -- I.E., DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS DEFENSE.
BUT AS ECONOMIC BASKET CASE LIVING ON INTERNATIONAL DOLE,
IT CANNOT ACQUIRE EVEN MOST ELEMENTAL EQUIPMENT WITHOUT
OUTSIDE HELP IN FORM OF GRANTS OR SOFT CREDITS. INVITED TO
SUPPORT ARMY'S DEVELOPMENTAL ROLE, WE WERE AFFORDED MEANS
OF ENCOURAGING THIS CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF RESOURCES. BUT BY
ADVISING GOR THAT IT PROCEED THROUGH COMMERCIAL CHANNELS
AND PAY THROUGH THE NOSE, WE LOSE THIS LEVERAGE AND
DISPLAY INSENSITIVITY TO SMALL NATION'S ATTEMPT TO BALANCE
DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY REQUIREMENTS WITHIN SEVERE RESOURCE
CONSTRAINTS.

--DOES THIS REALLY ADVANCE OUR POLICY OF DISCOURAGING
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WASTE OF SCARCE NATIONAL RESOURCES?

- AS ONE OF RWANDA'S AID DONORS, WILL WE NOT SIMPLY
FIND OURSELVES FILLING DEVELOPMENT GAP CAUSED BY UNILATERAL
GOR EXPENDITURES FOR COMBAT EQUIPMENT?

(B) EAST-WEST ARMS COMPETITION. PRESIDENT CARTER'S
MAY 19 POLICY STATEMENT AND SECRETARY VANCE'S JULY 1 SPEECH
BOTH STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING COMPETITION WITH SOVIETS
OR OTHERS IN SUPPLYING ARMS TO LDC'S. I HAVE REPEATEDLY ECHOED
THIS POLICY LINE TO PRES. HABYARIMANA, UNDERLINING IMPORTANCE
WE ATTACH INSTEAD TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. BUT U.S. ECONOMIC
AID TO RWANDA HAS BEEN SLOW IN MATERIALIZING, WHEREAS RWANDANS
THEMSELVES ARE AWARE OF REPORTED USG DECISIONS TO SUPPLY ARMS
TO FORMER SOVIET CLIENTS IN AFRICA, INCLUDING SOMALIA, SUDAN,
CHAD, AND EGYPT.

-- DO NOT OUR APPARENT POLICY CONTRADICTIONS OR "EXCEPTIONS"
LOGICALLY SUGGEST THAT COMPETITION WITH SOVIETS REMAINS MORE
IMPORTANT TO US THAN OUR DESIRE TO STEM ARMS RACE AND
CONCENTRATE ON DEVELOPMENT?

-- WILL NOT HABYARIMANA BE LED BY OUR NEGATIVE REPLY TO
HIM AND OUR VERY AFFIRMATIVE ACTIONS IN THE HORN TO EXAGGERATE
SOVIET-SUPPORTED MILITARY "THREATS" ON RWADNA'S BORDERS AND
PAY GREATER HEED TO ARMY OFFICERS' PRESSURES FOR COMBAT
EQUIPMENT?

4. IN A WORD, WHILE PROCEEDING TO SUPPLY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS
WORTH OF COMBAT HARDWARE TO NEARBY AFRICAN STATES, I FEAR WE
SHALL BE TELLING RWANDANS THAT WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN EITHER
THEIR SECURITY CONCERNS NOR THEIR OWN ARMY'S DEVELOPMENT ROLE.
IN MY OPINION, WE SHALL BE LOSING AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOURAGE
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HEALTHY RWANDAN INSTINCTS AND CHANNEL RESOURCES IN CONSTRUCTIVE
DIRECTION RIGHTLY SOUGHT BY CARTER ADMINISTRATION.

5. PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA RECENTLY TOLD LOCAL DIPLOMATIC
CORPS THAT RWANDA WANTS NO PART OF POLITICAL RIVALRIES AMONG
GREAT POWERS, BUT RATHER WANTS BOTH SIDES TO COMMIT GREATER
RESOURCES TO RWANDA'S OWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. I AM
IMPRESSED AT HOW NEATLY HIS POLICIES AND PRESIDENT CARTER'S
COINCIDE, BUT I AM SURE HABYARIMANA WILL WONDER AT WASHINGTON'S
RESPONSE TO HIS REQUEST FOR HELP.

6. IS THERE NO WAY WE CAN FIND TO ASSIST HIM IN STRENGTHENING
ARMY AS CONSTRUCTIVE TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVELY HELP
DISCOURAGE ARMS RACE IN AFRICA? CANNOT AN "EXCEPTION" BE
MADE TO PLACE RWANDA ON PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION LIST AS
ELIGIBLE FOR FMS CREDITS FOR NON-COMBAT RPT NON-COMBAT

MILITARY EQUIPMENT ONLY?

7. DRAFTER: AMB.
CRIGLER

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Message Attributes

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